



Mental Health Update April 13, 2007

Acute Care Program Chief joins DMH

Ms. Michelle Lavallee, M.S.W. has joined the Division of Mental Health as the new Acute Care Program Chief. Ms. Lavallee earned her Masters in Social Work from Columbia University after attaining an undergraduate degree in Government from Wheaton College. Ms. Lavallee most recently worked as the Senior Social Worker at Fletcher Allen Health Care providing clinical supervision to social workers at the hospital. Ms. Lavallee also held the position of Director of Inpatient Social Services at a 16-bed inpatient psychiatric facility in Arizona and Clinical Social Worker positions with both Mount Sinai Medical Center and Bellevue Hospital in New York. Ms. Lavallee's primary responsibilities at the Division will include working with the Designated Agency Emergency Services Programs, Designated Hospital Inpatient Psychiatric Units and oversight of the Division's acute care management program.

Monthly State Adult Program Standing Committee Meeting

The State Adult Program Standing Committee met on Monday April 9th. Committee members discussed the re-designation of Rutland Mental Health Services, the designated agency for mental health services for adults in the Rutland County area, and formulated their advisory recommendations for the Commissioner of Health. The committee also finalized and approved its first annual report on the operations of the Vermont State Hospital (VSH). The annual report, identified in the hospital's current bylaws, functions as an advisory tool for the VSH Governing Body. Committee members reviewed the hospital's proposed policy for Advanced Directives that will be discussed at the upcoming VSH Governing Body meeting. The committee also reviewed materials pertaining to the Futures Initiative and proposed FY 08 budget for the Division of Mental Health. The full agenda, meeting minutes, and VSH Annual Report will be available using the following link early next week:

<http://healthvermont.gov/mh/boards/adult/adult-state-standing.aspx>

FUTURES PROJECT

CCON Granted Thursday April 12

BISHCA granted a Conceptual Certificate of Need (CCON) to the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) authorizing planning expenditures up to \$4,355,000 to "create new inpatient programs to enhance psychiatric inpatient care and replace the functions currently performed by the Vermont State Hospital". The CCON permits the Division of Mental Health (DMH) to undertake the architectural, engineering, and planning activities needed to prepare a Phase II CON application. The Conceptual CON names 32 specific planning activities and analyses to be undertaken. It also establishes a two-year timeframe to complete the preparation of a Phase II CON application and requires that VDH/DMH make implementation reports to BISHCA at six month intervals.

Second Spring and VSH Staff Prepare for Transition

As more staff are hired for Second Spring, they are working closely with VSH staff to plan for the transition of patients. All Second Spring staff will take part in training over a two-week period, beginning later this month. Licensing requirements for the Second Spring facility have been met.

The April meeting of the **Second Spring Community Advisory Group** will be on Thursday, April 19, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Second Spring in Williamstown. Second Spring director, Roy Riddle, encourages community members and all others interested in providing input to the development and operations of Vermont's first residential recovery program to attend. The Community Advisory Group expects to help support special projects, education, and public information activities in addition to making a positive impact on the programming and outcomes for residents of Second Spring and their families.

Futures Advisory Committee

The next meeting of the Advisory Committee is May 7, 2:00-4:30 p.m., in the Skylight Conference Room, Waterbury State Complex.

Vermont Integrated Services Initiative (VISI)

On Monday, April 30, VISI, in partnership with Vermont Psychiatric Survivors and Friends of Recovery Vermont, will be conducting a focus group on the needs, challenges and priorities associated with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse issues. This will take place at the Turning Point Center in Rutland, 141 State Street, from 4-6 p.m. Interested consumers, family members and providers are welcome to attend. The phone number of Turning point is 773-6010.

There will an invitational Peer Group Facilitation Skill-Building Workshop facilitated by Sas Carey on Wednesday April 18 from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm at the Universalist Church in Montpelier. Attendees will sharpen their skills and learn new strategies for working with and supporting peers, including basic group dynamics, group cohesion, task v. process, listening and non-verbal communication, leadership, trust/safety and group closure. Participants will have an opportunity to practice skills with peers.

On May 11th, 2007, Commissioner Dr. Thomas Kirk of the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addictive Services will speak to the VISI Steering Committee about Connecticut's Behavioral Healthcare System and the work it has done on integrating co-occurring mental health and substance abuse services.

VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL CENSUS

The Vermont State Hospital Census was 54 as of midnight Wednesday night. The census over the last 45 days was 48.